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NATIONAL HUMILIATION AND REPENTANCE RECOMMENDED

by

Myles Cooper

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National Humiliation and Repentance recommended, and the Cauſes of the preſent Rebellion in AMERICA aſſigned, in

A

SERMON

PREACHED BEFORE THE

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,

ON FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13. 1776.

Being the DAY appointed by PROCLAMATION for a GENERAL FAST.

BY MYLES COOPER, LL. D.
Preſident of KING'S COLLEGE, NEW YORK; and Fellow of QUEEN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD.

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M DCC LXX VII.

IMPRIMATUR,

GEO. HORNE,

Vice-Can. OXON.

Decemb. 24. 1776.

PSALM VII. 1x. former Part.

OH, LET THE WICKEDNESS OF THE WICKED COME TO AN END; BUT ESTABLISH THE JUST.

THIS Pſalm is generally aſcribed to DAVID as its Author; but on what particular occaſion it was compoſed, or to what tranſaction it refers, is not eaſy, nor is it needful, to determine. The whole Life of this eminent perſon was a ſcene of ſevere trials and uncommon dangers. While a Subject, he was haraſſed with frequent Perſecutions; when a Sovereign, with repeated Rebellions. But his Heart was not daunted or diſmayed at the moſt alarming appearances. In All his difficulties he relied, for ſafety and protection, on that Goodneſs, which gradually advanced him from the Sheepfolds, to the Throne of ISRAEL; and in Many of them, he expreſſed the pious emotions of his ſoul in thoſe inimitable Hymns, which are graciouſly preſerved for the uſe of the CHURCH, to aſſiſt Our devotion in ſimilar caſes.

THE Pſalm now before us ſeems to have been compoſed, under a keen ſenſe of the injuries he had received, or of the dangers that encompaſſed him, through the implacable enmity of SAUL, or SHIMEI, or ſome of their Confederates. It contains an Appeal to the great Searcher of Hearts, for his

own innocence and integrity; a Prayer, that the wicked and malicious purpoſes of his Enemies might be defeated; and expreſſions of ſtrong confidence in the Divine Goodneſs, to aid him in all his difficulties, and to ſupport him under all his afflictions.

THE words of my Text undoubtedly had reference to ſome particular caſe: but as the Terms are general, they may ſerve to expreſs the wiſhes and prayers of good men, with regard to Wickedneſs in general, be the inſtances of it private or public, more confined or more extended. They are accordingly applicable to the Deſign of this Day's Solemnity; which is --- at the Call of a moſt gracious Sovereign, who is ever anxiouſly attentive to the welfare of his Kingdoms, and the happineſs of his Subjects, --- to humble ourſelves before our ALMIGHTY CREATOR --- to confeſs and bewail our own unworthineſs --- to implore the pardon and forgiveneſs of our manifold offences --- to deprecate thoſe heavy Judgments, which our innumerable Provocations have moſt juſtly deſerved, --- and then, further, to beſeech Him, by the intervention and aſſiſtance of his good Providence, to put a ſpeedy End to that *enormous* wickedneſs, --- to that wanton and barbarous REBELLION, which, at this time, is deeply diſtreſſing to Millions of our Fellow-ſubjects, and of highly detrimental conſequence to the whole Britiſh Empire.

THE Propriety and Wiſdom, as well as the Piety, of this meaſure, in the preſent ſituation of our public affairs, can hardly be diſputed by any who profeſs and call themſelves CHRISTIANS. It is founded on Principles that are common both to natural and revealed Religion. The Principles here meant

meant are ſuch as the following: That He, who created the World by his Power, governs it by his Providence: that his Government of the world includes in it the direction of All events, and eſpecially of thoſe which more immediately concern the general intereſts of Kingdoms and Nations: That, without his Concurrence, and unattended by his Bleſſing, effects are not anſwerable to the appearance of the powers that are to produce them; "the race being not *ſecure* to the ſwift, nor "the battle to the ſtrong:" and, That his Bleſſing is to be expected, and can properly be requeſted, only in the way of Obedience and Duty.

In Conſequence of theſe Principles every wiſe Nation (to ſay nothing of Individuals) will ſee the Propriety, in all caſes of danger and embarraſment, of intereſting in its favour that Superintending and Controlling Power, to which all the Kingdoms of the Earth are ſubject; and which conducts, or ſuſpends, or reverſes at its pleaſure, the natural effects of ſecond and ſubordinate Cauſes; and to that End, will perceive the neceſſity of fulfilling thoſe Conditions, on which alone all reaſonable hopes of obtaining ſuch aſſiſtance are founded.

WHERE the Character of a Community is properly virtuous and religious, the Nature of Things, and the Promiſes of GOD, are its Security: they are ſuch Anchors, as may ſafely be truſted, amid the greateſt Storms and Tempeſts that can beat upon a State. While "Righteouſneſs exalteth a Na-"tion," --- and ſtrengthens, and renders it reſpectable, by its natural operation; it ſecures theſe great ends more effectually, by engaging the Favour of Divine Providence. GOD has de-

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clared, That "them that honour Him He will honour," --- whilſt "they that deſpiſe him ſhall be lightly eſteemed."

BUT the great Queſtion is, How is the bleſſing of heaven to be obtained by a Sinful Nation, ſuffering under any public calamity? --- Neither Reaſon nor Revelation can point out any other Means to this End, but that of Changing its character; by "putting away the evil of its doings," --- by "ceaſing to "do evil, and learning to do well;" or, in other words, by a general Repentance, Reformation, and Amendment.

Now the proper way for a People to enter upon a Reformation, is by a public and ſolemn act of Humiliation and Abaſement; ſuch as we are called upon to perform This Day; in which all Orders of men, from the higheſt to the loweſt, proſtrate themſelves before the throne of Grace, --- humbly confeſſing, bewailing, diſclaiming and renouncing their paſt Offences, and forming reſolutions of future Obedience.

ALTHOUGH this in itſelf be not a Reformation, yet it is a proper Beginning; and, when performed in Sincerity, uninfluenced by the too common motives of Hypocriſy or Oſtentation, is ſuch an act of homage paid to the great Governor of the Univerſe, as He often rewards with a ſignal Bleſſing.

IT was by a public act of Humiliation, that the infamous and abandoned AHAB, whoſe Story diſgraces even the ISRAELITISH Annals, averted the ſtroke of Divine Juſtice, that was intended for his deſtruction. It was by a ſolemn humiliation of this kind, that the deſtruction of NINEVEH was ſuſpended; although the purpoſes of Heaven to deſtroy it within

within a few days, had been formally declared, under a ſpecial commiſſion, by an inſpired Prophet. The tremendous prediction operated aright --- "and the people of NINEVEH believed "GOD and proclaimed a FAST, and put on ſackcloth, from "the greateſt of them even to the leaſt of them." This was the only expedient that could be ſuggeſted, for bringing them within a Poſſibility of eſcaping.

THE King, who exerciſed his authority on the occaſion, was a ſtranger to the general declarations of Divine Revelation; but, from the commonly received notions concerning the meaſures of Providence, he was led to form ſome faint Hopes that GOD, in *ſuch* a caſe, would be merciful. "Who "can tell (ſays he) if GOD will turn and repent, and turn "away from his fierce anger, that we periſh not?" As the Humiliation was great, and the Repentance ſincere, his Hopes were not diſappointed: for the narrative proceeds --- "And "GOD ſaw their works, that they turned from their evil way; "and GOD repented of the evil that he had *ſaid* that he would "do unto them, and he did it not."

ON the former of theſe caſes it may be obſerved, that the faſting and prayers of a notorious Profligate, who had even "ſold himſelf to work wickedneſs," ſaved both Him and his Family from the Judgments that awaited them: and it appears, in the latter, that the ſolemn humiliation and repentance even of a Devoted and Pagan City, could reſcue it from the Vengeance, with which it was on the Point of being overwhelmed. Theſe caſes are both recorded in Scripture; and the caſes there recorded are deſigned as Inſtructions and Examples for all ſucceeding ages.

WHAT

WHAT an Encouragement then do they afford to the duties of this Day! Eſpecially, if it be alſo conſidered, that Cities and States are under ſuch an Equal diſpenſation of Providence, that their Rewards or Puniſhments, in this world, always bear ſome due proportion to their reſpective prevailing Characters. As to Individuals indeed, the event, with regard to temporal proſperity, may be different: For there is another world for Their reception, where the proper rewards of Individuals are to be diſtributed; where, with reſpect to Them, all the inequalities of this will be fully adjuſted; and where GOD "will render unto all according to their works:" But, as to Kingdoms and States, this world is the only ſtage of Their Exiſtence. All earthly ſocieties will, at the lateſt, be diſſolved in the diſſolution of the Earth; and if the virtuous are not rewarded, and the wicked are not puniſhed, in this world, there will be an apparent failure in the adminiſtrations of Divine Providence.

THIS Doctrine is confirmed by the hiſtory of all ages, and all countries. There never was a virtuous and religious People, that was not rewarded with proſperity and happineſs; nor a wicked and corrupt State, that was not, ſooner or later, made to undergo ſome exemplary puniſhment; and we may with confidence pronounce, that there never *will* be --- unleſs Degeneracy on the one hand, or Reformation on the other, ſhould interpoſe to prevent it.

THE foregoing Conſiderations naturally lead us to reflect on the religious and moral ſtate of This Kingdom in particular, and on the Title It can claim to the bleſſing of heaven, under its preſent difficulties.

ON

ON contemplating the Advantages we enjoy, and the Obligations we are under, it might be reaſonably expected that our Improvements were eminent; and, as a NATION, that we were a pattern to the WORLD, of every religious, moral, and political Accompliſhment. We are enlightened by the full Splendour of the "Sun of Righteouſneſs:" the beams of Revelation have diſſipated the clouds that reſted on our natural faculties: all the motives to right conduct, whether relating to this world or the next, are placed clearly in our view. Our RELIGION is that of the GOSPEL OF CHRIST --- "pure, "peaceable, gentle, and eaſy to be entreated, full of mercy "and good fruits;" and its Efficacy is not obſtructed by thoſe Superſtitious Impurities, which it had unhappily contracted in its paſſage through ages and regions of ignorance and darkneſs. For, by the REFORMATION, it has been reſtored to its original Perfection; and of Courſe has recovered its original Quality of being profitable --- "for doctrine, for reproof, for "correction, and inſtruction in Righteouſneſs."

OUR CIVIL Conſtitution, which is fair and beautiful in Theory, is admirably fitted for the Regulation of an orderly, if not for the Reſtraint of an unruly people. If it be wanting in Energy, the defect ariſes from principles that are friendly, I had almoſt ſaid partial, to Liberty: And it muſt be granted, on all hands, that no ſubjects of any government are ſo free from arbitrary controll, or enjoy ſuch conſtitutional Rights, as the ſubjects of BRITAIN. At the ſame time, though we are apt to complain of the Weight of our Public Expences, --- yet it is, I believe, an undoubted Fact, that this Burden lies much heavier on the ſubjects of every neighbouring Kingdom and Republic,

Republic, --- and probably of every Independent State upon Earth, where Civilization and Refinement have made any conſiderable Advances.

We are alſo peculiarly happy in the natural Advantages, and in the wonderful Improvements, of this "pleaſant Land," of this "goodly heritage," which the Providence of God hath allotted to an hitherto-favoured people; through which great Numbers have been raiſed to Wealth and Affluence, and every prudent and Induſtrious perſon amongſt us *may* acquire and enjoy a Comfortable Subſiſtence, --- with a few exceptions of extraordinary caſes, for which the Public is always willing to provide.

With theſe advantages, internal and external, religious and political, we ought to be the moſt thankful people upon earth; the moſt virtuous, and the moſt happy. But what improvements, in *this* way, have we actually made? What have we "rendered unto the Lord, for all his" diſtinguiſhing "Be-"nefits?" --- Time was, when the Inhabitants of this Iſland had the Character of a ſober, virtuous, and religious People: But that time, it is to be feared, is paſt. For, though Religion has not entirely departed, --- and virtuous examples are to be found in every rank and order of men amongſt us; yet he that hath eyes muſt ſee that ſuch inſtances have become rare; ſo rare indeed, as to carry with them the appearance of Singularity. The want of religious Principle, want of Serioufneſs, --- groſs Senſuality and endleſs Diſſipation, with their natural train of evils, --- too ſurely conſtitute the moſt ſtriking Features, in a true portrait of the preſent age.

IT was the Complaint ſome time ago, made by a very judicious Obſerver, [a] but with particular reference indeed to our great Metropolis (though in ſo ſhort a courſe of years it is now become almoſt equally applicable to many inferior places) That "the Goſpel of Chriſt --- had been not only rejected, but "treated with a malicious Scorn; and all our hopes in Him "repreſented as deluſions and impoſitions on the weakneſs of "men: --- that the Preſs for many years paſt had ſwarmed "with books, ſome to diſpute, ſome to ridicule, the great "truths of Religion, both natural and revealed: --- that the "Earneſtneſs with which theſe books were ſought after, the "Pleaſure and Approbation with which they were received, "were too ſtrong indications of the general taſte, to be diſ-"ſembled: and the Induſtry, uſed to diſperſe theſe books, "both at home and abroad, and eſpecially IN OUR PLANTA-"TIONS IN AMERICA, were proofs of ſuch Malice "againſt the Goſpel, and the holy Author of it, as would not "have been borne even in a Mahometan Country."

IN Conſequence of ſuch pains taken to unſettle all religious Principles, he obſerves, That Idleneſs, and an unquenchable thirſt for Pleaſure; that Lewdneſs and Debauchery, Outrage and Violence, immediately enſued: "and that, though Some "have pretended to preſerve a Senſe of Virtue without the "Aid of Religion, yet Experience has ſhewed, that people, "who have neither hopes nor fears with reſpect to another "world, will ſoon abuſe this, by indulging the worſt of their "paſſions; and will not regard Man, when once they have "learned to diſregard GOD."

a Bp. Sherlock's Letter to the Inhabitants of London and Weſtminſter, 1750.

THE above Portrait was drawn near thirty years ago: and if it was a juſt repreſentation then, the Original, I fear, has not ſince improved. The great increaſe of our Wealth, within that period, hath certainly encreaſed the Means, and too probably the Inclination, to abuſe it.

NOW, ſuch Luxury, Vice, and Irreligion, when generally predominant, have commonly proved the Forerunners of ſome public Calamity, and frequently of national Deſtruction. Wickedneſs, if left to itſelf, would work theſe effects: but we have ſeen that the Providence of GOD alſo interpoſes, to make thoſe States and Kingdoms the Examples of Puniſhment, whoſe Principles and Morals are greatly and groſsly corrupted.

INSTRUMENTS of Chaſtiſement can never be wanting to Him, who has all Nature at command; "whom the winds and "the ſeas obey;" who can ſtop the Sun in its courſe, and extinguiſh the lights of Heaven: but the Sword, the Peſtilence, and Famine, are the Judgments, with which he moſt ordinarily puniſhes guilty NATIONS.

WAR, at the very beſt, even when ſucceſsful, is a ſore Viſitation; a mark of GOD's anger, under which people ought to tremble, and "learn Righteouſneſs:" but CIVIL WAR is one of the ſevereſt ſcourges of Heaven: it is the Sword of Divine Vengeance, which is two-edged, and wherever it ſtrikes brings double ruin and accumulated deſtruction. When one part of the force of a nation is employed againſt the other, it muſt ſoon be deſtroyed, unleſs the progreſs of this exterminating evil can be ſpeedily and effectually reſtrained: for "every

"every Kingdom *thus* divided againſt itſelf, is brought to De-"ſolation," if the conteſt be ſuffered to continue.

As a Puniſhment for the ſins of This Nation, for our Immoralities and Corruptions, --- our ingratitude to Heaven, and our neglect of Religion (and perhaps partly for our neglecting to provide properly for the Support of it in our PROVINCES and PLANTATIONS,) --- we are now reduced to this dangerous and critical ſituation. An Inſurrection of the Members againſt the Head, has thrown the Body into Convulſions which are truly alarming. Or, in other words --- Our moſt flouriſhing and populous Colonies, the glory and pride of this Nation, and which have been conſidered as no ſmall Source of its Strength as well as Affluence, have, on pretences the moſt frivolous, and with inſolence the moſt provoking, revolted againſt the Kingdom that produced and protected them. Thoſe Children, whom we nouriſhed and brought up, whom we have foſtered in our boſoms, and even pampered with more than parental partiality, have *rebelled* againſt us! --- Hear, O Heavens; and give ear, O Earth! If any thing can be ſtill more unnatural and audacious, it is, that theſe degenerate Inſurgents *have* had their Fomentors and Abettors in the very Heart of this Kingdom; who, forgetful, for a while, of Themſelves and their Country, not only appeared publicly and exultingly in our Streets and in our Markets, but too many of them even in our Pulpits --- in our Senate --- in our moſt ſecret and moſt ſolemn Councils.

WHEN ſuch evils break out againſt a State, without any juſt reaſons or groſs provocations, they ſeem unqueſtionable marks of the indignation of Heaven, and can hardly be attri-

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buted to any other cauſe. It is difficult indeed to aſſign any reaſons, that will Juſtify the Rebellion of Subjects againſt the Sovereign Authority. "Submiſſion to the higher powers" [a] is enjoined at leaſt upon Chriſtians, under the ſevereſt penalty. But, were Chriſtianity altogether out of the queſtion, yet the inſurrection of ſubjects againſt their Rightful Governors, is condemned by thoſe Laws which are fundamental to SOCIETY.

THAT which will go fartheſt in Excuſing a Revolt, is the Tyranny of Rulers. But the Rebellion of our Colonies was planned, and fomented, by Its Leaders, without any Pretence of this nature. The Coloniſts were not in a ſtate of Oppreſſion; nor could they be made to *believe* that they were. Grievances indeed were pretended; and a Liſt of them was publicly exhibited: But of theſe, ſome were evidently no grievances at all; and if any of them were really deemed to be ſo, they were much more than counterbalanced by peculiar Advantages. In ſhort --- Notwithſtanding their Complaints, the Americans knew, and Moſt of them were willing to confeſs, "that they were the happieſt of all people;" --- ſeated in the boſom of peace and never-failing plenty, --- enjoying the benefit of mild and equitable Laws, --- ſecured by the Protection of This Kingdom againſt every Suſpicion of danger from Foreign Invaders, and contributing far leſs than their Proportion towards defraying the general expences of Government.

HOW then (it will naturally be aſked) could a people, thus happily ſituated, be perſuaded to ſacrifice theſe advantages, and to hazard their Fortunes, their Lives, and their Souls, in ſuch

[a] Vid. Rom. XIII.

ſuch a Rebellion? To this Queſtion a ſatisfactory anſwer may be expected, from one who reſided in that country, during the time of the apparent riſe, and gradual progreſs of this miſchief, till it came to Maturity: And ſuch an anſwer might indeed be *given* to the enquiry; but my Time will not allow of that Detail, which is neceſſary to put the matter in its proper Light, and to exhibit the chief Characters in their genuine colours. I muſt therefore content myſelf with the following Obſervations, viz. ---That Many of the Coloniſts were of Republican Principles, and had an hereditary diſaffection to the Engliſh conſtitution: who wiſhed for an opportunity, and endeavoured to create one, of becoming independent on the parent Kingdom: ---

That theſe perſons were perſuaded to put themſelves under the Direction both of ambitious and needy Adventurers; who, by raiſing a Storm, were in hopes of advancing their own Intereſts; --- the former, by getting command of the Veſſel; --- the latter, by bearing plunder from the Wreck: ---

That the Diviſions in This Country, about the Rights of Election, and other ſubjects of Debate and Altercation; the Triumph of Oppoſition in ſome caſes; the ill-timed lenity of Government, in yielding to popular Clamours, inſtanced in the Repeal of an Act which will long be remembered; together with the Aſſurances given to the Malecontents by their Correſpondents *here*, of being able to afford them all proper ſupport and neceſſary aſſiſtance;--- were thought to be favourable Incidents, and encouraged the Leaders *there* to riſque the Experiment: ---

That, in order to engage the Americans in General to promote the deſign, its Conductors pretended, That a regular Syſtem was formed, "by a corrupt and abandoned Adminiſtration," for oppreſſing and enſlaving the colonies; of which every exerciſe of authority over them, however expedient, or *uſual*, was alledged as a convincing Proof: that ſuch Acts were Invaſions of their Natural Rights --- of their Chartered Privileges,--- and even of that unalienable "Liberty wherewith Christ had made them free:" that every motive of Prudence, Policy, and Religion, required them to forego all Conſiderations of *preſent* eaſe and convenience, in a manful and timely Aſſertion of theſe Eſſential Rights, before the Chains that were forged ſhould be rivetted upon them: and laſtly, in order to leſſen the Horrors of the propoſed enterprize, they affirmed, and pretended to prove by accounts from hence, That but little Danger attended it; as the Appearance of Firmneſs and Unanimity on Their part, would ſoon compell the Miniſtry to recede from their claims, and to comply with every demand of the Colonies, rather than conteſt the matter by Force, --- for which they were not and could not be provided. --- And the people were not perſuaded to "take Arms," without the ſtrongeſt aſſurances that they would have no occaſion to make Uſe of them.

When the great point of Arming was thus carried, every vile art was practiſed to inflame the minds of the Populace: Miſrepreſentation of Facts, falſe Intelligence, fictitious Letters from England, and even forged Acts of Parliament, all adapted to the occaſions of the Day, were warmly and ſeduloufly applied. The Common People were frequently called from their Ploughs

Ploughs and their Workſhops, to concert plans for ſecuring the Liberties of their Country; --- by which they became ſenſible of their own Importance. By Them, under the direction of proper Leaders, Committees were choſen, Correſpondencies ſettled, Aſſociations and SOLEMN LEAGUES provided and impoſed; and, to *perfect* the "good work," Religion itſelf, or rather the Appearance of it, humbly miniſtered as an handmaid to Faction and Sedition. And it is well known, that ſolemn Prayers, public Faſtings, and pathetic Sermons, were ſome of the moſt effectual means that were employed to invigorate the Rebellion. Add to This, and it is moſt worthy of Attention, That, as the plot advanced, the dangerous Conſequences of any propoſed meaſures were always concealed, or denied, till they actually happened: And the very Conduct, which the artful Conductors, in imitation of the Father of deceit and rebellion, repreſented as innocent and warrantable, in order to gain a Compliance, --- after that was ſecured, they repreſented as abſolutely unpardonable; ſo that a retreat was rendered impoſſible; and it was then become neceſſary to go forward, at every hazard, and to the laſt extremity.

SUCH arts would almoſt "deceive the Elect;" and it is no wonder that they prevailed with the ignorant, the prejudiced and unprincipled, to join with the crafty, the profligate and deſperate, in executing the meaſures of their aſpiring Demagogues.

THE Remonſtrances of his Majeſty's well-affected and Loyal Subjects could avail but little: the voice of Reaſon, drowned in the din of licentious Tumult, was not to be heard: and they, whether Speakers, or Writers, or Printers, who endeavoured

deavoured to withſtand the Torrent, were treated with the greateſt inſolence, abuſe, and inſult; --- to which permit ME to add, That Some of them were in the utmoſt danger of ſuffering the very laſt of human evils, by open violence, or more private Aſſaſſination. Nay, "they HAVE ſaid, come and let "us root them out, that they be no more a People, and that "the NAME of ISRAEL may be no more in Remembrance."

AT length, "Every man to his Tents," was oſtentatiouſly proclaimed; and war was levied againſt our moſt gracious Sovereign. From that time, all that was bad has been growing unſpeakably worſe, throughout all the parts of that once happy Country.

HIS Majeſty and his Miniſters *might* indeed, by a vigorous exertion of Power, have cruſhed this rebellion on its firſt Appearance: But They armed with reluctance; hoping that Extremities might ſtill be avoided; and that thoſe deluded Subjects would open their eyes to ſee "the things belonging to "their peace," and eſſential to their felicity. As the Fear of exorbitant Taxation, in Conſequence of the Claims of Government, had been the principal Complaint on the ſide of the Colonies; in order to *quiet* this fear, and to reſtore harmony, if poſſible, an offer was made, under the ſanction of Parliamentary Authority, to put the matter in debate on ſuch a footing, as to ſecure the Americans againſt the abuſe that was dreaded.

BUT the propoſal was ſcornfully rejected, under the Pretence of its being *inſidiouſly* made; and within a few days they commenced open Hoſtilities againſt the royal troops which had been

been ſent thither --- not to conquer a Rebellious country, but to ſupport the Civil Magiſtrate in the due execution of his Office. From plundering the King's Stores, and ſeizing his Forts, that were not ſecured againſt ſuch an unexpected and audacious Intruſion, they proceeded to invade thoſe of his adjacent dominions which were diſpoſed to adhere to their duty. And the Succeſs that for a while attended them, exceeded their own Expectations, and added much to their Inſolence.

It then evidently appeared, that Nothing but the Sword could decide the conteſt: and it was time to think of providing for this melancholy, but neceſſary purpoſe. Accordingly, ſuch a Force was ſent over, as ſoon as the Seaſon and other circumſtances permitted. Yet after all, while the Sword was taken in one hand, --- as no injuries or provocations could ſtifle in the parent kingdom, the natural ſuggeſtions of Tenderneſs and Compaſſion in favour even of thoſe froward, petulant, and rebellious Children, --- the Olive-branch was extended in the other, ſtill courting them to a peaceful accommodation of the unhappy difference. In what manner this Condeſcenſion and Goodneſs have been alſo ſlighted, as well as how brutally the beſt of Princes and of Men hath been debaſed and inſulted, our late accounts have fully informed us. Alas! Rebellion is like the deaf adder, and regards not the voice of the charmer: it is ever obſtinate, and will liſten to no entreaties.

From the foregoing Sketch it is evident, that Government has been compelled to have recourſe to the Sword, after a fruitleſs trial of every milder method; and we may ſafely appeal to heaven and earth for the Juſtice of This Cauſe. To Heaven indeed we actually make our appeal in the ſolemn Offices of

THIS DAY; and we humbly implore its Bleſſing, in full confidence that our Motives are ſuch as it approves.

IF it be right in a Sovereign State, to attempt the forcible ſuppreſſion of a wicked and unprovoked Rebellion, after all perſuaſive methods have failed; then this War is juſt, on the part of Government. If it be right in a Kingdom, to attempt the recovery of its own dominions that have been wreſted from it by the hand of lawleſs Uſurpation; then the war is juſt and neceſſary. If it be right in a Prince, to afford protection to his loyal and beſt ſubjects, againſt the Tyranny and Oppreſſion of his worſt and moſt diſloyal; then the war is juſt, neceſſary, and laudable.

AND here, though I have greatly treſpaſſed upon your patience already, I muſt beg leave to obſerve, (and an obſervation it is, which I am ſatisfied will afford much pleaſure to all thoſe before whom I have the happineſs to make it) That even in thoſe revolted Colonies there are ſtill Thouſands and Ten-thouſands of his Majeſty's Subjects, of inflexible Loyalty, who have been induced by no Menaces or Perſecutions, to bow the knee to the BAAL of INDEPENDENCY, or to ſwerve at all from the duties of Allegiance. In this number are included a large Proportion of the men of Property, the Greater Part of the Members of the Church of England, and, in Several of the colonies, all its Clergy, without Exception,--to ſay nothing of Others. Theſe, from the Beginning, have been the objects of Republican Rage, and fanatic Malignity. The common portion of all having been the moſt bitter and ignominious Invectives; to be treated as the off-ſcowering of the earth; to be inſulted by the very Beaſts of the people, and plundered

plundered of their Property, without any Means of preſent Redreſs, though it is to be hoped, not without a Proſpect of Future Retribution.

THOSE who *diſtinguiſhed* themſelves in oppoſing the popular meaſures, met with proportionably ſeverer treatment. Were this a proper time and place for the narrative, I could unfold ſuch ſcenes of Perſecution and Cruelty, as would excite the Indignation and Horror of every Soul in this Aſſembly. I could give a catalogue of perſons, who for the above-mentioned Offence *only*, have been haraſſed by Committees, dragged about by the populace, and driven through the ſtreets, with circumſtances of Indignity too ſhocking to be related. I could tell of many, who, on account of their Loyalty, have been reduced from Affluence to Extreme Poverty: of many, who have been torn from their Families, and forced into Baniſhment, leaving their Wives and Children at the mercy of their Perſecutors. Of others, who have been bound and fettered like the worſt of Malefactors, and then conſigned to endleſs Impriſonment; where they are, at this time, groaning under the utmoſt vexation and diſtreſs, and perhaps *periſhing* for want of Neceſſaries: Of others, who have been glad to ſeek refuge in the Wilderneſs, for many weeks together, without food and without ſhelter; where they were ſtill followed and hunted, like ſo many Beaſts of Prey, by their inhuman Tormentors.

AND laſtly; I could mention the Conflagration of a fair and flouriſhing City, unfortunately doomed to more than barbarian fury, for its known Attachment to the Conſtitution of this Country "above its Fellows," (which the King's troops diſdained to injure, and even took Pains to ſpare, though *then* in poſſeſ-

 ſion

ſion of the moſt ungenerous Enemy,) by a Set of deſperate Incendiaries --- inſtigated, moſt probably, by ſtill greater Incendiaries at a Diſtance --- without any Proſpect of Advantage to Themſelves, and for the ſole purpoſe, it ſhould ſeem, of doing Injury to Others. In which dreadful calamity, had it not been for the Spirit and Humanity of the Britiſh Forces, not only the Loſs of immenſe Property, above what was actually deſtroyed, muſt inevitably have enſued; but, in Many inſtances, Old and Young would have periſhed together in one common devaſtation; the Sick and Infirm have been conſumed upon their "bed of languiſhing," and the ſucking infant have dropt breathleſs into the flames from the breaſt of its diſtracted mother. --- But I would avoid raiſing any paſſions, which might interfere with the ſolemn Devotions of this Day, and therefore haſten my return to the point from which I have wandered.

One important object of this war, as hath been intimated, and which proves it to be a *juſt* one, is to protect thoſe Loyaliſts who have been thus perſecuted for adhering to their allegiance; and to reſtore them to their legal rights, and till now undoubted poſſeſſions. For theſe purpoſes the ſword is unſheathed, and the battle ſet in array: It is with a View that ſuch *monſtrous* "Wickedneſs of the Wicked may come to an end," (to uſe the language of my Text) and that the "Juſt may be eſtabliſhed;" or, in the words of the Royal Proclamation, That the King's "loyal Subjects within his Colonies and Pro-"vinces in North America, may be delivered from the violence, "injuſtice, and tyranny of thoſe daring Rebels, who have aſ-"ſumed to themſelves the exerciſe of arbitrary power." Never was there a more worthy Object of military Exertion; never was the Power of any Nation better employed!

Having

HAVING made the neceſſary Preparations for this important and unavoidable Conteſt, we are now to put our truſt in ALMIGHTY GOD for Succeſs; and to implore his Bleſſing on our Fleets and Armies: to humble ourſelves before him, under a ſenſe of our Sins; and to form ſincere Reſolutions of becoming more WORTHY of the Bleſſings we implore. If throughout the Nation there is a due Compliance with this pious call of our Sovereign, we have great Reaſon to hope that our prayers will be regarded; that all thoſe heavy Judgments, which our manifold ſins and provocations have moſt juſtly deſerved, will be averted; and that GOD will reſtore to us the "Bleſſing of Peace" in every part of this extenſive empire. The many important advantages already gained, by the bravery of our troops, under the ſkilful conduct of their reſpective Commanders, may THEN be conſidered as ſo many Earneſts of greater favours, and as introductory to the complete and ſpeedy re-eſtabliſhment of order, harmony, and good government, in a miſerably diſtracted Country.

On the whole --- It is of the utmoſt conſequence to us, that our preſent Faſting be not like that of "the Hypocrites," but that it be performed in "ſimplicity and godly ſincerity;" that we "faſt not to be ſeen of men," much leſs "for ſtrife and debate, and to ſmite with the fiſt of wickedneſs;" --- but in order to "put away the evil of our doings, that *ſo* Iniquity may not be our Ruin." If on this occaſion we truly "turn unto the LORD our GOD," we ſhall find that "he is gracious and merciful, ſlow to anger, and of great Kindneſs." For ſuch is his goodneſs, that in conſequence of the Repentance and Reformation of ſinful Nations, "he repenteth him of the evil" with which he may have threatened

threatened them. " Be merciful (therefore) unto us, O GOD, be merciful unto us, for our ſoul truſteth in THEE; and under the ſhadow of thy wings ſhall be our Refuge, untill this TYRANNY be overpaſt!"

AND, for the future, let us be particularly guarded againſt thoſe licentious Principles of the Times, which in their natural Tendency are ſubverſive of Government; which have more immediately contributed to bring on the calamity we now deplore; and which, more than once, have brought this Nation to the very Brink of Deſtruction.

WHEN mens Principles are wrong, their Practices will ſeldom be right. When they ſuppoſe thoſe Powers to be derived ſolely from the People, which are " ordained of GOD," and their heads are filled with ideas of Original Compacts which never exiſted, and which are always explained ſo as to anſwer their preſent Occaſions; no wonder that they confound the duties of Rulers and Subjects, and are perpetually prompted to dictate where it is their Buſineſs to obey. When once they conceive the Governed to be ſuperior to the Governors, and that they may ſet up their pretended Natural Rights in Oppoſition to the poſitive Laws of the State; they will naturally proceed to " deſpiſe dominion, and ſpeak evil of dignities," and to open a door for Anarchy, " Confuſion, and every evil work," to enter.

SUCH wild, viſionary, enthuſiaſtic Notions, with regard to Society, have always been counteracted and oppoſed by the example and inſtructions of this Univerſity; which may without vanity boaſt, that amid the greateſt revolutions of human affairs, and fluctuation of opinions, it hath been ſteadier in its Principles,

Principles, and ſuffered more for its Conſiſtency in the ſupport of Regal Government, than perhaps any other place of the like nature, in the Chriſtian World. And whilſt its ſupreme literary rank commands the higheſt reſpect from all lovers of Science; the Soundneſs of its religious and political Principles, muſt ſecure the eſteem of the wiſe and worthy, and entitle it to the patronage of the great and virtuous.

To conclude: If we wiſh for national proſperity and happineſs, it concerns us in the firſt place to "fear GOD," that we obtain the protection and bleſſing of his good Providence; and then, by a natural progreſſion, we ſhall "honour the KING," by obeying, and endeavouring to ſupport, his LAWFUL AUTHORITY. The Health of a State requires a regular and due ſubordination of its Members to the governing power; and its Strength ariſes from their performing each of them the proper functions aſſigned them in the political Body, without obſtructing one another in their reſpective Offices.

LET every man then be contented with his Station, and faithfully diſcharge its attendant duties. Let every *private* view be abandoned, as ſoon as it is found to interfere with the Intereſt and Honour of the Public. And let it be the earneſt endeavour of One and All, to promote internal Peace, Harmony, and UNANIMITY, which are things eſſentially requiſite to public proſperity and national happineſs. Were it not for our Diviſions at home, our Colonies abroad would never have DARED to inſult us: and were the Subjects of this Kingdom HAPPILY UNITED, and ready to exert themſelves in one proper line of direction for the Common Defence; it would, under Providence,

Providence, be invincible; and no Combination of Foreign Powers could make us daunted or diſmayed.

MAY that Almighty and All-gracious Being, in whoſe hands are all the Nations of the Earth, and from whom all good Counſels and all juſt Works (as well public as private) do proceed, make us "perfect" as a Nation, "ſtabliſh, ſtrengthen, SETTLE us!" May we All, in our reſpective ſtations, be excited and enabled to correct what is amiſs, and to "hold faſt that which is good!" May we learn to "be of one Mind, and live in Peace; and the GOD of Love and Peace ſhall be with us!" To Him be aſcribed all Glory and Dominion, Adoration and Praiſe, for ever and ever, AMEN.

FINIS.

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